

**Some ways to minimise the cost of an autism diagnostic assessment to you:**

1/ **Private health fund rebates** available for Australian Unity, HBA, Medibank Private, MBF, and most other health funds (dependent on your level of cover).

2/ **Medicare 'Helping Children with Autism' items for Assessment and Diagnosis.** Provides a partial rebate (\$83.25 per session) for both sessions required to complete the assessment. In some cases an additional \$83.25 rebate for the report is also possible. A referral must be arranged through your child's paediatrician.

3/ **Carer Allowance.** Once a diagnosis of autism or Asperger Syndrome is made, parents are entitled to this fortnightly payment (which is not means tested). The twelve weeks of back-pay granted will cover all the psychologist fees involved in the autism diagnostic assessment.

*Outside the Square* Psychology

Kirsty Kerr, Principal Psychologist

Level 1, 1368 Toorak Road  
Camberwell, VIC, 3124

PO Box 5064  
STUDFIELD, 3152

Ph: (03) 9889 9932

***Diagnostic assessment brochure  
November 2011***



# **AUTISM DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS**

**Kirsty Kerr**

*B.B.Sc., Grad. Dip. Ed. Psych., Assoc. M.A.P.S.*

***Psychologist***

### ***What is Autism Spectrum Disorder?***

'Autism Spectrum Disorder' is a collective term used to describe a number of developmental disabilities, including the diagnoses of:

- Autism (autistic disorder)
- Asperger Syndrome
- PDD-NOS (Pervasive Developmental Disorder not otherwise specified)

Children with autism spectrum disorder show differences in three main areas of their development:

- Communication
- Social interaction
- Imagination difficulties, leading to repetitive or inflexible behaviours, and restricted interests

### ***How is it diagnosed?***

The assessment process should involve a team of professionals:

- Psychologist or psychiatrist
- Speech pathologist
- Paediatrician

Each member of the team spends time observing the child, looking for the presence of characteristics of autism.

The team members also investigate the possibility that another diagnosis might better account for the child's difficulties. Emotional or behavioural difficulties, language disorder, chromosomal abnormalities or developmental delay will all be considered.

The paediatrician will refer the child for a hearing screening, and a blood test. The speech pathologist will complete a language assessment.

The psychologist interviews parents about their child's past development, and about their current abilities. The psychologist also observes the child's play skills and interaction skills.

Finally, team members consult with one another to come to a consensus on the correct diagnosis.

Kirsty Kerr offers diagnostic assessment as part of a team, including the paediatrician and speech pathologist your child currently sees. Recommendations for these professionals can be made if you require this.

### **FEES PAYABLE**

Kirsty offers the following components as part of a diagnostic assessment:

A comprehensive interview about your child's development using the Autism Diagnostic Interview (ADI-R). This will take around 3 hours. \$350.00 is then payable.

An observation session of your child, using the Autism Diagnostic Observation Scale (ADOS-G). This will take around one hour. \$350.00 is payable at this time

Consultation time with your child's paediatrician and speech pathologist to discuss their observations.

A written report detailing the assessment and diagnosis. \$250.00 is payable.

The cost for entire psychology component of the diagnostic assessment is \$950.00

A feedback session to discuss the report, and cover any questions you still have can also be booked separately. A Medicare rebate may apply.

To make an appointment for an autism diagnostic assessment, contact:

Outside the Square Psychology on  
(03) 9889 9932

